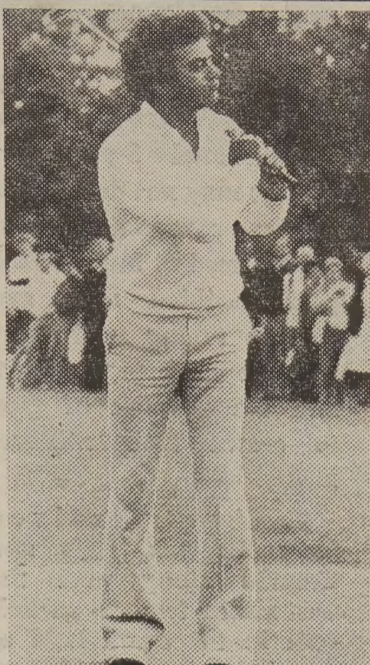




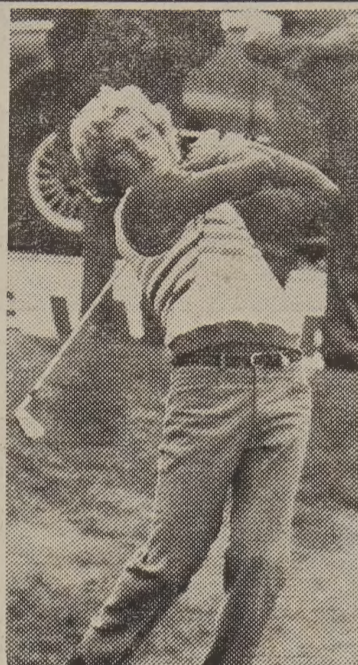
Classic shots — as stars play the charity game



EX-President Gerald Ford and comedian Bob Hope acknowledge the cheers as the Bob Hope Golf Classic swings into action, with a target of raising £100,000 for the Stars Organisation for Spastics and the Bob Hope Arts Foundation, Eltham. A clutch of their fellow golfers are pictured and there is more about the Classic on Page 12. The event brings big names — and big headaches for with an ex-President on the course there were security problems to contend with—as well as the summer!



● **HEART** throb with a golf club is Johnny Mathis, who gazes pensively after a shot during the Classic, which attracted the stars and the crowds to Moore Park.



● **BERNHARD** Langer on his way to a £15,000 top prize in the Classic, which, outside the British Open, is the biggest in Europe. This was the second year of the Classic and despite appalling rain figures were up on last year.



● Mmmm . . . Tony Jacklin looks suitably concerned as he crouches on the green and plans his next manoeuvre — with prize money of £100,000 at stake in the Classic it's no wonder he's concentrating hard.



● IF it's not his "magic wand" from BBC TV's "Blankety Blank" or a microphone from his radio show—then it must be a golf club that the ever-popular Terry Wogan has to hand, ready for a fine performance.

SOCIETY FIGHTS FOR VAT RELIEF

THE Spastics Society may have lost the first rounds in its battle to persuade the Government to relieve charities of the crushing burden of VAT, but it has certainly not lost the war, and October sees the start of a vigorous new campaign for fair treatment. And

**£300,000
a year
tax bill**

with VAT costing the Society £218,000 in the last financial year, and an estimated £300,000 in the current financial year, the campaigners are determined that

the Government must recognise the urgency — and the justice — of the case for relief.

Previous demands by the Society, and the seven other leading charities which banded together to fight the VAT battle, have been refused by the Government. This in spite of a very sound case, particularly where it hinged on the plea for charities to be granted VAT relief in the same way as local authorities.

Unfair

Service charities, such as the Society, and local authorities often provide identical facilities for the handicapped and disadvantaged, but the VAT anomaly means that similar establishments can stand side by side in the same street — one paying its levy to the VAT authorities and the other free of the costly burden. One pays because it is run by a charity. The other does not because it is run by the local council.

First shots in the new
Continued Page 12



DEBORAH, the donation doll's special charm, attracted Sarah Cross, aged two, and her brother, James, four, as soon as they saw her. They gave their father, Richard, no peace until he took them into the Canterbury Spastics Shop which is her home, to give Deborah some coins.

Well, that is one reason for visiting a Spastics Shop, but what else draws people to spend anything from a few pennies to several pounds? Spastics News visited a typical Spastics Shop to seek the answer from customers. Why were they there? What were they buying? Full story on centre pages.

Cover boy Stephen

PRIDE of place on the cover of The Spastics Society's newly-published Annual Report goes to a full colour picture of Stephen, a nine-year-old pupil at Beech Tree House, the Society's pioneering unit at Meldreth Manor School for multiply-handicapped children.

Optimism

Spastics News can't show Stephen's picture in colour, but the confident smile sets the tone for an Annual Report which, in spite of financial difficulties, greets the future with optimism, and suggests that the Society is "turning the corner" away from the disturbing deficits in recent years.

The deficit for the financial year 1980-81 has been reduced to £583,000, and this was achieved through economies and some reductions in services to spastic people. However, the hopeful aspect of the financial report is that the
Continued Page 12



A JOYFUL Stephen, sitting at the wheel of a go-kart donated to the Unit by the BBC TV "Blue Peter" appeal which was administered by the Society.

Newton Aids Speak-a-Lock



With the Newton Speak-A-Lock System, you can control just who enters through your front door, even if you are confined to bed, without interfering with normal key action. The Speak-A-Lock is inexpensive, easy to install, and virtually maintenance free. Send for details today.

Newton Aids Ltd, Dept SN/100, FREEPOST, Salisbury, Wilts.



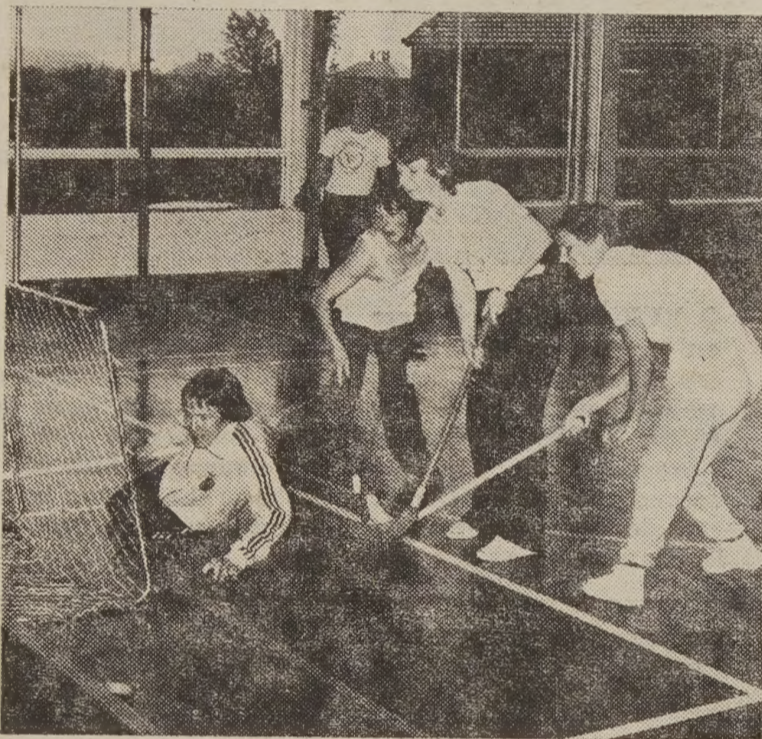
• MARTIN Mansell makes a splash at Holme Pierrepont Water Sports Centre, Nottingham, just as he was taking the lead from Chris Hamshire.

Cash raising cure for 'boredom'

A GROUP of Fleet youngsters in Hampshire found a quick cure for boredom recently — they organised a jumble sale for the Society. It was the brainchild of Nicholas Smith, 11, and Sarah Burrell, 10, who organised their friends to bring unwanted toys, books, games and clothes round to the Smith home.

Sarah explained: "We were just a bit bored and wanted to do something to raise money." And Nicholas added: "There is a person we know who is handicapped and so we wanted to do something to help."

By setting up a microphone to broadcast the sale and fete, and sending more friends out on their bikes to spread the word, Nicholas and Sarah made £11 — more than double the figure they expected.



• IT is Belgium versus Canada at a spirited trial of strength during a Unihoc event at the International Cerebral Palsy Games.

Golden harvest for our athletes

NOTTINGHAM is a far cry from Moscow, and the International Spastics Games may not draw quite as many competitors as the Olympics, but for the 100-plus disabled men and women taking part there was the same urge to win and the promise of gold to crown their achievements.

Contingents arrived from Belgium, Italy and Canada along with the host nation team to participate in the event held at Trent Polytechnic, Clifton. The games were formally opened by Nottingham and England batsman Derek Randall, and a civic reception was held by the chairman of the County Council, Mrs Joan Case, which was attended by the Society's Chairman, Mrs Joyce Smith, the competitors and their helpers. And another guest at the Games was Nottingham Forest footballer and England player, Viv Anderson.

Swimming

The athletics included throwing events, long jump, wheelchair slalom and track races up to and including 400 metres. The second day was given over to swimming events at the Beechdale Baths, with free-style swum with and without aids, and back, butterfly and breaststroke. Later back at the Clifton Campus there was football and weightlifting. A mix-



• WINNERS by three-quarters of a length were the British relay team, and our picture shows Clifford Maggs, Paul Heinke, Chris Hamshire and Martin Mansell after their victory at Nottingham's Beechdale Baths.

ture of different sports were open to spectator participation on the closing day.

The 35-strong England team was captained by Norman Burns and contained stars of the regional spastics games such as Alyn Haskey, Ann Trotman and Claire Ribiero-Ayeh.

Many of the English team went on to take part in an International Games held in Kassel, West Germany, lead by Arthur Edwards, the Society's Physical Education Adviser. They were based with the German team at an adventure centre in the middle of a forest four kilometres from Kassel and meals were supplied by the German Army from a mobile field kitchen.

Athletic, archery and football competitions were held at the Kassel sports stadium and the German Army supplied all the officials for the events. The English team were successful in winning six out of the seven team cups for the men and women's swimming relays, the men and women's wheelchair relays, the men's running relay and the seven-a-side football competition. The team were also successful in winning many individual events against strong competition. The Chief Minister of Hessen attended part of the Games and the Burgomeister of Kassel held a civic reception.

Now the team has been invited back to take part in the next games in 1983.

"HELP FOR THE ELDERLY AND DISABLED"

British Gas offers a wide range of help to those who need it most, particularly the elderly and disabled.

If you are elderly or disabled, here are some of the ways in which we can make life easier for you. If you know somebody who might benefit from these services, please pass the information to them.



FREE GAS SAFETY CHECKS

Make sure that your gas appliances are working safely and efficiently by having them serviced. And make sure that servicing is only done by competent people.

A free gas safety check on your gas appliances and installations is available if: You are 65 or over and you live alone; You are a registered handicapped person of any age and you live alone.

This free check includes any necessary adjustments as well as materials up to the cost of £2.50 (including VAT). You might have to pay for any additional work that needs to be done.

Gas fires, water heaters and central heating systems all need servicing from time to time. All customers can be assured that their appliances are operating safely and efficiently if they have them serviced regularly.

You should also bear in mind that checking and making safe a suspected gas leak is FREE for all customers. Simple gas leak repairs will also usually be free. If you suspect a gas leak at home or in the street, report it at once. The phone is quickest — call the emergency number for your area, under "GAS" in the local telephone directory.

AIDS FOR THE DISABLED

Modern gas appliances are much easier for disabled people to use. Gas built-in ovens and hot-plates can be placed at a convenient height in the kitchen for people in wheelchairs or for people who find it difficult to bend down or reach up when they are cooking. Most cookers and fires now have automatic spark ignition and need no matches to light them.

If you have a hand disability, you might find the controls on your cooker or gas fire difficult to operate. British Gas has devised a range of special adaptors

which should make life easier. There are four types of tap handles specially designed for cookers, each of which will fit many different models, and tap adaptors for many gas fires.

There is a nominal standard charge of £2 (plus VAT) per appliance for supplying and fitting adaptors to a new or existing appliance.

If you know someone who is blind or has failing sight, please tell them about braille controls for cookers and central heating. The clock controls which switch central heating on and off can be brailled. Special braille or studded oven thermostat dials are available for most gas cookers, together with braille cooking charts.

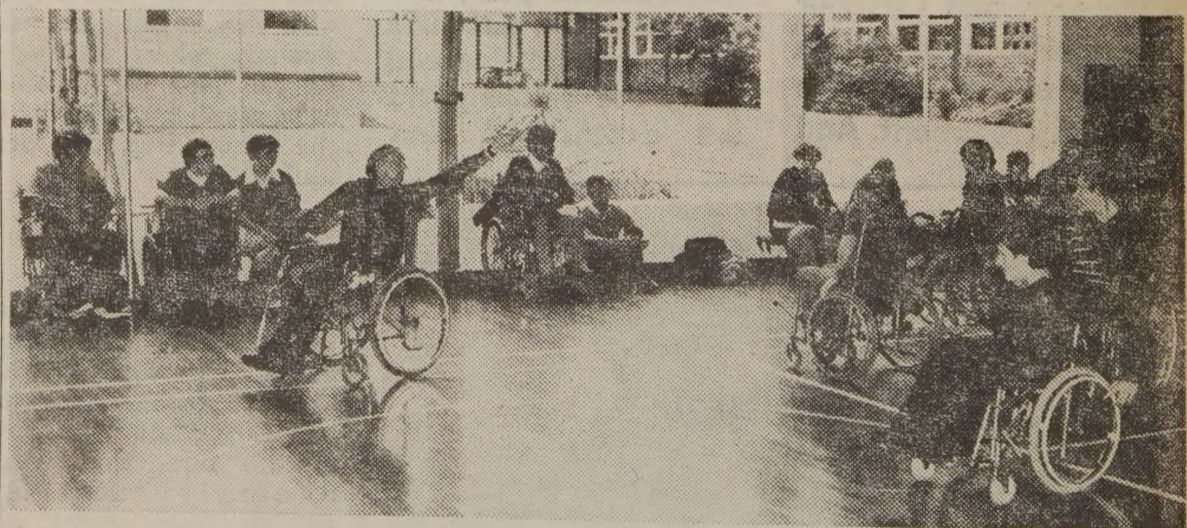
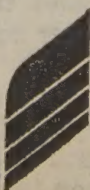
ASK US TO HELP YOU

British Gas has a team of Home Service Advisers, who will call on disabled people at home and provide free advice on the use of gas. They can provide information about special adaptors and handles and advise on the choice of suitable appliances.

If you would like to contact the Home Service Advisers or to enquire about free gas safety checks, regular servicing for appliances or aids for the disabled, visit your local gas showroom or telephone the gas service centre (the phone number is under "GAS" in the local directory).

The showroom can also tell you about easier ways to pay your gas bills, and how to get help if there is real hardship — ask for the Code of Practice, "Electricity and gas bills for your home." It can also provide advice on energy conservation, helping you to save gas and save money.

BRITISH GAS



• THE Clifton College basketball court in Nottingham is taken over by the Westbrook School team from Long Eaton for a practice before their determined try for the title.

Star's jammy idea for funds

ONE of Britain's best loved comedy actresses is mounting her own fund-raising scheme which should jam the foyer of the theatre where she is appearing.

For Peggy Mount, a Stars Organisation for Spastics member has copied an idea from the past she is playing, and made 100 jars of jam to sell for the SOS. Peggy is making her first appearance in a musi-

cal at the Theatre Royal Stratford called Mrs Tucker's Pageant, in which she plays a village busybody who helps a fund raising effort with her home made jam.

Now Peggy is asking her fellow stars and members of the public to get out their preserving pans and get stuck into the task. She hopes for a rich harvest of jam to sell in the next few weeks.

Peggy explained: "I was

born in Essex, so naturally enough I got involved with Wakes Hall, run by the SOS. There are about 25 severely handicapped residents and like all these places it costs a lot of money to run. So far I've made 100 jars — and picked all the fruit myself — strawberry, loganberry, raspberry and blackcurrants! I wouldn't claim to be a professional jam maker — it's hit and miss most of the time."

'My first year' — by the Society's Director

A YEAR ago Tim Yeo left a successful career in business to become Director of The Spastics Society. At the age of 35 he was taking on one of the top jobs in the charity field, and one of the most demanding at a time of record financial deficit. In October 1980 he was full of enthusiasm and energy for the task ahead — how does he feel in October 1981?

The Editor of Spastics News decided to find out, and in a question and answer session the Director revealed his thoughts on the first year, reviewed the Society's current achievements, and looked forward to future developments. And after a year of hard work, it must be said that the energy and enthusiasm of October '80 is undimmed!

Have you enjoyed your first year at the Society?

Yes, I have, even more than I expected.

And what do you think has been achieved?

I think there has been an improvement in morale, and I feel there is a greater sense of purpose than there was a year ago. Yes, there have been changes, and because of the need to make economies, some of the changes have been painful.

Other changes have been important administratively. The appointment of the Director of Regions was a vital step, bringing closer co-operation, and a better relationship with our affiliated groups, and there has been a change in committee structure. Also, we have a new Director of Finance, and a Deputy Director to work on long-term planning.

What do you mean about committee structure?

We have cut the number of committee meetings, and made a clear distinction between the Executive Council, which is concerned with major aspects of policy, and the Management Board, concerned with the day-to-day running of the Society. Also, we are reviewing the terms of reference of all the committees.

One of the Society's major problems is finance—or lack of it. Is the picture still very bleak?

We are turning the corner, and we are sure there will be a major improvement next year, and by the financial year 1982-83 we are confident that because of the measures we have taken, there will be no deficit. Then, instead of worrying about where we can cut back, we can think about where we can expand. And if only we could do something about that wretched VAT. . . .

What sort of expansion? Any plans yet?

During the next months the Executive Council will want to determine priorities, but obviously among the choices will be more direct services to spastic people, a pioneering concept in residential care, or a unit like Beech Tree House which has done such interesting work in the treatment of difficult children who, in addition to their severe behaviour problems are both mentally and physically handicapped.

We will not enter any scheme without very careful planning. There is a spirit of what I can best call "commonsense" in the Society, and this will ensure that assets are used most carefully.

The Society has always been a campaigning organisation. Will this continue? What about the "Save a Baby" campaign, for instance?

The Society will always be a radical pressure group. As to the "Save a Baby" campaign, that will go on, but in a slightly different form. The campaign has achieved its purpose of making people aware of the need for action to prevent needless death and handicap. Now we wish to emphasise different aspects, and ways the campaign's objectives can be achieved.

The people of Britain seem to agree with the aims of the campaign. What about the professionals, not only in medicine, but in the Civil Service? The administrators, after all, provide the funds for the improvements in the care of the mothers and babies at risk.

I think there is a debate on how some of these improvements can be brought about. We will play our part in ensuring that the issue is kept to the forefront of the public—and the Ministerial—mind.

Yes, I know there is a debate on how NHS money should be spent when there are so many important claims, but the prevention of needless death and handicap is vital. Our campaign has achieved much, but there is a long way to go. However, we can certainly say that the national change of heart on prevention can be attributed to the Society.

Obviously the Society will not rest on its campaigning laurels. What other issues are of particular concern?

We are involved in all aspects of the lives of spastic children and adults, of course, but at the moment we are particularly interested in education and employment. We want to carefully monitor the progress of the integration of handicapped children into ordinary schools. Are these children being truly integrated? And what will be the effects of this year's Special Education Bill?

Employment of spastic people is a great concern. Unemployment amongst the disabled is so much higher than with the able-bodied, and we want to have discussions with the Depart-

TIM YEO talks to Spastics News



ment of Employment, the CBI and the Trade Unions about this, and especially about the quota system.

We feel there must be many more opportunities for disabled people to work in open employment if they wish — and many do because a job in the community means real integration. Some, of course, have such severe handicaps that they must have a sheltered environment, such as that provided in our work centres. At these centres we must have a stimulating, optimistic atmosphere, and adopt a very positive approach in seeking orders for more interesting work.

The revolution in technology has brought so many advantages to disabled people, not only at work where it can enable them to be as productive as the able-bodied, but also for those who cannot handle a job because of the severity of their handicaps. For those very handicapped people we must offer fulfilling activities, in education and leisure, to enrich their lives.

The Society will be celebrating its 30th anniversary in 1982. Is there a danger that after all these years it may become set in its ways, part of the establishment, and "middle-aged" in its outlook? Never! But I do take the point. Yes, many of our supporters were young parents when the Society began, and they have "grown old" with the organisation. One of the things we must do is attract the young parents, while at the same time, not making the older ones feel pushed out, because they have worked so hard and their contribution is still vital. We have to find a way of developing both strands, and one idea is to allow the formation of new groups in the same geographical territory as our existing, affiliated local groups.

Surely that is a radical move which could cause problems? Local groups are very jealous of their territories!

All I have said is that it is an issue for discussion. But we must not forget that some young people may not wish to join a formal local group, but wish to set up a more ad hoc self help group of their own. Surely we must encourage them? All are working for the same ends.

This is a vital time for voluntary organisations. Some people have been used to relying on the State, but with the financial climate these days, and in the foreseeable future, the role of the voluntary organisation will be very important, both at local and national level.

Now on to the subject of money, and ways of raising it. A successful picture?

Deeds of Covenant improving, mailing appeals doing very well,

Spastics Shops doing well, fees and grants, happy with those as we have achieved a satisfactory increase of income; investment income about £1 million, the Spastics Pool an important source, legacies a bit sticky, but we have now appointed someone to call on solicitors about wills . . .

Heavens, isn't that a bit ghoulish?

Certainly not, quite the reverse. People are much happier if they have made a will leaving money to a charity. They are comforted by the knowledge that their money will help others after their death.

I see that you could go on talking about the different aspects of the fund raising operation, but what of the future? Food shortages will mean an enormous increase in appeals for the Third World, and in addition to international demands for money new charities are springing up all the time. Will the Society be able to compete? Are you worried?

I'm not worried, but I know there will be very severe competition. We will just have to become even more professional in raising money won't we? The public has not deserted us yet, and I'm sure it never will.

Leading on from that last question about funds, the demands on public generosity and the claims of — what is it? — over 130,000 charities. Do you think some of the organisations working in a similar field should amalgamate? Can you foresee a time when the Society will join with others working for the disabled?

I know that other charities envy our experience and expertise, and yes, it could happen. We are bigger than almost any other charity so it would mean others coming in under our wing. It could be that this could serve the interests of both the public and the clients by avoiding duplication of effort. We will have to see what the future brings, won't we?

And what about the vexed question of the name The Spastics Society. Some people object, vocally, to the term "spastic" and would like to see a change of title. What do you think?

I cannot see it happening because the name is so well known. There is no policy on this, however. What I will say is that we have no objection to affiliating groups which do not have the word "spastic" in their title, but have been set up for the welfare of the handicapped generally.

Finally, on this year of yours. You say you have enjoyed it, but what else has it meant to you?

It has been so very interesting, much more so than my previous career in business. As I have travelled around the country visiting schools, centres, and local groups, I have been constantly impressed by the dedication of the staff and the effort and enthusiasm of the children and adults in their care. Out at the "sharp end" of our work you find such a positive atmosphere of devotion, and I don't think that anybody could fail to be touched. At the end of a working day I feel I have been a part of a truly worthwhile enterprise. This job is a real challenge . . .

I must interrupt you there. You are going to say it is "rewarding," aren't you?

Yes, and I don't care if you think I am using a well-worn cliché. It is a rewarding job. If I didn't honestly believe that, I wouldn't be doing it.

I take it, then, that you like it here?

Yes!

HANDICAP '81 and SEE BY TOUCH

A great day out for all disabled people with an emphasis on participation and enjoyment to be held at the

NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL CENTRE

Stoneleigh, Kenilworth, Warwickshire

on

SUNDAY 8th NOVEMBER

10.00 a.m. — 6.00 p.m.

Gardening, Sports, Crafts, Aids, Trade Stands, Food & Drink, Farming Display

Seminars by Disabled Living Foundation

Evening Entertainment from 7.00 pm to 10.00 pm with Hog Roast and Wheelchair Dancing

FREE ADMISSION

For further details contact:

Joanna Righton, National Agricultural Centre, Stoneleigh, Kenilworth, Warwickshire Tel: Coventry (0203) 555100

Future developments on special education

A MEETING/Open Day to discuss The Spastics Society's future role in the education of handicapped children and young people will be held at the Society's Dene College of Further Education, Shipbourne Road, Tonbridge, Kent, on Thursday, December 22.

The Society is reviewing its educational establishments in the light of recent developments in special education, particularly the Education Bill, and the Working Group document on the review of the legal basis of further education.

Directors of education and social services and senior medical and other professional staff will be able to exchange views with the Society's Director and senior staff on the Society's contribution to special education. Discussion sessions will be led by:

Mr G. V. Cooke, Vice-Chairman of the Warnock Committee, Mr F. H. Green, HMI, Mr F. J. Adams, Director of Education, South Glamorgan.

Further details from: The Education Officer, The Spastics Society, 12 Park Crescent, London W1N 4EQ.

Antiques aid 'new look' fund

A TABLE that once graced the Society's Daresbury Hall residential centre when it was a private home is one of the many unusual and valuable antiques for auction this month in the Long Room at Eaton Hall, the home of the Duke of Westminster.

The Duke heads the Daresbury Hall Improvements Campaign which has already raised half its target of £250,000 to give residents a room of their own. The auction on October 14 is to raise funds for the rest of the figure.

Items to go under the hammer, include silver plated candleabra, an English carriage clock, two solid silver spoons bearing the Chester crest, a string of pearls, and oil paintings including four from the Marquis of Cholmondeley's collection of military art. The table was donated by General Glover.

Meet Rene the rocker — just 'dancing' the nights away... to the wheel chair beat



WE'VE had wheelchair waltzes now its wheelchair rock as Vancouver's answer to John Travolta boogies the night away in a disco. Rene Landreville was determined that disability should not cut him off from his rock ing and rolling contemporaries. So rock on Rene.

IN Britain wheelchair dancing is done by teams, moving in formation to old time music. Across the Atlantic, Rene Landreville who is 28 and confined to a wheelchair boogies down to the Vancouver equivalent of Annabel's and rocks the night away.

He tilts his chair back until his feet are balanced a foot or two above the ground, then rocks, reels and whirls to the beat of the live band. So successful is he that the comment that often greets his expertise is: "I wish there were more people doing what you're doing."

And after six years of "dancing" as much as five times a week, the club, Rohan's, has created a lifetime niche for him on their free guest list.

The skill with which Rene performs his routine is so magical that he's rarely refused when he asks a partner for a dance. Whether it's the novelty value, the fact that girls trust him or just sheer fun, Rene doesn't know but he says: "I ask a lot of people I don't know — I'm pretty bold."

But he admits that the first time he wheeled his way into the Vancouver night club and decided to dance he wasn't that confident. "I was pretty nervous. I got the singer to clear the floor and danced with the waitress. After that everyone gave me a big cheer."

Radical

His grace and style and "radical moves" have become a regular feature of the night club scene. When the night is over, Rene thumbs a lift home. He became practised at that when he decided to hitch from Vancouver to Ottawa, in 1975. His reasons were identical to those of the rest of his generation — "I didn't

have any money so I decided to hitch-hike." It took him just six days to travel the hundreds of miles — including bad patches of long waits between rides.

From Ottawa he hitched to Toronto before returning to Vancouver to become a man with a mission — the best wheelchair dancer in Canada.

The beat

And who knows his success might inspire a rock and roll revival among boys and girls who rely on wheelchairs to get around here. All they need is an ear for the beat and the capacity to laugh it off if they do take the odd tumble.

Even a virtuoso like Rene takes a tumble from time to time. Then fellow dancers just set him back up and he rejoins the fun.

Picture by Images, Vancouver.

Films sought for major Festival

THE 1981 International rehabilitation Film Festival will be held from November 4-6, in New York, and will feature over 100 films and videotapes on all aspects of disability. The Festival is sponsored as a contribution to the International Year of Disabled People by the United States Mission to the United Nations.

The Festival invites entries from all countries on all aspects of physical and mental disability. It is anticipated at least a dozen countries will take part in this year's show. Programmes are entered in 13 categories, covering medical rehabilitation, social attitudes, employment, recreation, education, and so on.

For further information, contact: John F. Moses or Nina de Fels, Film Festival, Rehabfilm, 20 West 40th Street, New York, NY10018.

Ads, announcements

CHAMPNESS and Hammond one storey Homelift for two people or 350lb. Little used in the 10 years since installation, perfect condition. Offers of £2,600 to Boardman, Enstone 627, evenings.

THE Leonard Cheshire Foundation Hostel for disabled students, situated at Taylor House, Osler Road, Headington, Oxford, has a vacancy for a disabled student. It would be suitable for anyone studying or preparing for Oxford Colleges of Higher Education, The University Colleges, Oxford Polytechnic, Oxford or Abingdon Further Education Colleges, or Plater Hall Adult School. There are also many tutorial and language schools in the area. A student studying for an Open University degree would also be considered, subject to satisfactory academic reports.

Support for a place in the

hostel is usually available from government and local authority grants but there is a Bursary fund to assist those in financial difficulties.

Taylor House is a small and friendly unit capable of accommodating four students of both sexes. Full board, day and night care and transport available. The care assistants are young, and generally are recent graduates themselves.

Those interested in applying could contact, in the first instance, Mr Bob Dunston, Taylor House, Osler Road, Headington, Oxford.

BRISTOL and District Spastics Association will be holding a Barn Dance at the Pastime Centre, Lockleaze, Bristol 7, on Saturday, October 31, from 7.30 pm to 11.30 pm. Tickets, £2 per head to include food, dancing to a live band, a licensed bar, and a tombola. Tickets from Mrs Lydia Little, 36 Ravenhead Drive, Whitchurch, Bristol, BS14 9ANU (with s.a.e. please).

naidex '81

The National Aids for the Disabled Exhibition and Conference

Sponsored by Radar & Macmillan Journals Ltd

The Exhibition will feature the very latest in equipment for the disabled

The National Agricultural Centre Stoneleigh, Kenilworth Warwickshire 21-24 October 1981

Free Admission to Exhibition

The Conference will be held at the
National Agricultural Centre

Exhibition details and floor plans are now available from

Naidex Conventions Limited
Temple House 36 High Street
Sevenoaks Kent TN13 1JG
Telephone (0732) 59533-4



1981
The International Year
of Disabled People



Special low cost rail travel
is available, please contact
Naidex Conventions Limited
for further information

The day they saw a Society film...

ONE of The Spastics Society's most outspoken films, *Like Other People*, has, more than any other, captured the interest of the audiences to whom it is shown. Helen Gray, the Society's Film Librarian, regularly sends it out to a variety of people, women's groups, youth clubs, community organisations and schools. Normally the story ends there but recently the film was screened for pupils at the John Port School, a comprehensive at Etwell, Derbyshire. A teacher

'It wasn't a nice thing to watch... I was a bit scared ... felt like crying'

Philippa West:

When I had to watch the film on spastics I felt sorry for the people involved. I thought it was terrible that people have to live like that. I lead a normal, happy life but the people in the film are so restricted to what they can do. I feel so lucky, because they are helpless and are unable to do things for themselves.

At one point I felt like crying because some people who are perfectly normal moan and grumble about their lives but they don't know how lucky they are!

Shaun O'Connell:

They don't know what's going on in the other world, our world, it's shut out from them. They are people in those wheelchairs, not some strange aliens, but we don't know — we're shut out. If only we could understand that all they want to do is talk with us — and try to be more normal.

Adele Fowens:

When a spastic tries to talk it seems to be a groan, they speak very slow and their voices are low and the words come out as a moan.

Sue Parkin:

He looked out of the window looking sad and sorry sitting patiently in his wheelchair. How could God create such a lonesome, mixed up human? No running, no proper conversation, no nothing for him. Just sitting there patiently watching 100 per cent humans pass by.

Is it worth having a

Deborah Spencer:

I didn't like to see the man, Willie, kissing or holding hands with Margaret as it seemed false. I feel guilty for thinking like this because even if they are not normal they should be able to have relationships. But it wasn't a nice thing to watch. I cannot imagine how they could fancy each other.

They should be able to get on with whatever they want to do but I don't think they should put it on a film to show like an exhibition of wax work models. They should be able to marry and lead a private life just like we do. Simon Shelto:

As his mouth moved, a few grunts came out, and tried to form words, that were all in a mess. She tried to get him to count, so he began, a very low voice tried to speak.

David Jones:

People really are ignorant. They don't care if I live or die — as long as they don't have to see me. They go round in their own little worlds thanking God that they themselves are "normal." I try to tell them that I am normal, I just need a little help — but they won't listen.

brain at all when it doesn't even work completely? Why do people ignore him in the street? Why do people stare at him as if he were someone out of space? Why can't he be seen as a human? Please, please somebody help him, and give him a special treat. Anything will do. Treat him as human as you would you.

had the idea of asking the pupils for their reactions to the award-winning film. Here we publish a representative selection of their work. Readers may be shocked at the reactions of some of the young people, but there is no doubt that the film made them think. Some of the harsh reactions also proved there is a long way to go before the most severely handicapped can hope for full integration into the world of the able-bodied.



● WILLIE and Margaret, the spastic couple who are central figures in the film *Like Other People*, which was seen and frankly commented upon by the pupils. Though handicapped, they want society to understand and recognise their perfectly normal need for emotional and sexual fulfilment, marriage and a home of their own — just *Like Other People*. The words they speak are their own and are far more eloquent than any script-writer's, and the film won many awards as well as critical acclaim.

Ian Pearce:

Outside they are unfortunate children. Doomed by nature to some appropriate fate. Surely they don't feel, surely they don't think, like me and you! Why are they like this? I don't know, I don't care. What are they to do with me? What can I do?

Robert Miller:

Normal! What is normal? Beauty, elegance, intelligence? Estate house, estate car, two children doing well at school? No chance.

David Dawber:

How stupid can you get? Allowing schoolgirls in their teens to view you like a pet in a store for old has-beens. It really is crude to let these little gals, sympathise with you — then giggle with their pals. It should be stopped at once, because it isn't right, to take you for a fool — and end up full of spite.

Linda Hosking:

The half-filled glass to prevent spills, the ignorant stares and whispers, the frowns of confusion on the spastic's face as he fumbles for the inconveniently placed handle. The smiles of reassurance come from the barman, the boy smiles back but his face is crooked. He knows the smiles are pitying not friendly. He lives with this burden. He knows they laugh and tease him, and he copes and is happy.

Theresa Kesterson:

Before we saw the film everyone was apprehensive. Some began to laugh when the film started and others seemed frightened. I was a bit scared — when the film started.

Stephen Rushton:

Have difficulty holding glasses. Could only drink a half pint from a pint glass. But still enjoy the simple pleasures of talking in a pub.

Richard Hills:

We are not accepted by Society. We are shunned, not wanted, laughed at. Why? Is it our arms, our legs, our lack of sex appeal, our unbearable faces. We are clever, in our own way. We can love, love one another. We want to be loved, to feel one another's affections. They won't let us love each other. "It's wrong." "Not acceptable." — Nor are we.

Mark Burton:

Their talking was all broken and distorted. They tried to talk — but their tongues seemed to jump out to stop them.

M. Wheeldon:

At first I felt repulsion. That it shouldn't be allowed. Keep them locked away. Then I felt more pity. Of how more should be done — as long as it had nothing to do with me. Just as long as I know nothing.

YOUNG OUTLOOK

Graham Meeds:

I found the film repugnant. I thought that it was unfair to show the film without a prior explanation of what it entailed. If you have spastics in society I think it would be impossible to mix and it is unfair to ask them. Spastics do not seem to understand how much time, money and energy is spent on them because they demand more. If they want sex, let them have it, but don't make such a fuss about it.

I don't think it matters if they have, or they think that they have, the same brain and thought patterns as we have.

I am not sure what we ought to do with them but giving them a place in society isn't the answer. The man who said spastics were paid less in factories has to realise that they do not work as well or as fast as other workers.

Spastics are not helpful and never can be.

Films worth seeing

"LIKE Other People" can be hired from Concord Films Council Ltd, 201 Felixstowe Road, Ipswich, Suffolk IP3 9BJ, tel Ipswich 76012; Viscom Ltd, Park Hall Road Trading Estate, London SE21 8EL, tel 01-761 3035; or the Film Librarian, The Spastics Society, 12 Park Crescent, London WE1 4EQ, tel 01-636 5020. Price £8.50 plus VAT and postage.

The film is just one of a wide range available from the Society covering every aspect of life for the disabled and those who are concerned for them. The full film catalogue can be obtained from the Film Librarian at headquarters.

Spread new happiness with your Lonely Toys

THE Spastics Society is after your toys ... not your new toys, but the old favourites which are now forgotten, packed away at the back of cupboards because they are "grown out of," but much too good to throw away.

Such sad and lovely toys — wouldn't you

like to see them go to a good home where they will bring fresh enjoyment and pleasure to new owners?

The Society is running a Lonely Toys appeal through its network of Spastics Shops, to gather up all those once-loved treasures and help them bring happiness to other children.

Happiness not just because new young owners



will enjoy playing with YOUR toys but because the money raised by selling them in the shop will

benefit spastic children.

Children have already shown what they can do this year with the success of the BBC TV Blue Peter appeal, administered by the Society, during which they showered Spastics Shops with goods for sale towards the £1,127,000-plus collected. So the Society is confident for the success of this new appeal.

First thing to do (after seeking out those neglected toys, of course!) is to look for the address of

your nearest spastic shop.

If there isn't one in your town, surely you have parents or relatives who are travelling to the nearest shop and who would make a special delivery for you?

The Lonely Toys appeal will run from now until Christmas — and with all those new toys coming along then isn't it a good idea to clear your cupboards to make room for them?

Tell your parents and

teachers about the appeal, and also your friends and neighbours, because the chances are that they would like to help. Perhaps you could get together and organise special collections in your school, youth club, or in your road?

When you take a toy into one of the Spastics Shops you will be given a special Lonely Toy appeal badge — like the drawing here and you can wear it with pride, knowing you have earned it by helping others.

Spastics News visits a Spastics Shop to m



● MRS Linda Carr of Canterbury depends on the local Spastics Shop for much of her clothing. "It's all I can afford," she explained. "I'd walk around naked if it wasn't for the Spastics Shop, prices in the other shops are much too high for me." She claims that one morning when she came down and found the shop closed for alterations she "went frantic and started banging on the door thinking it was closing down."



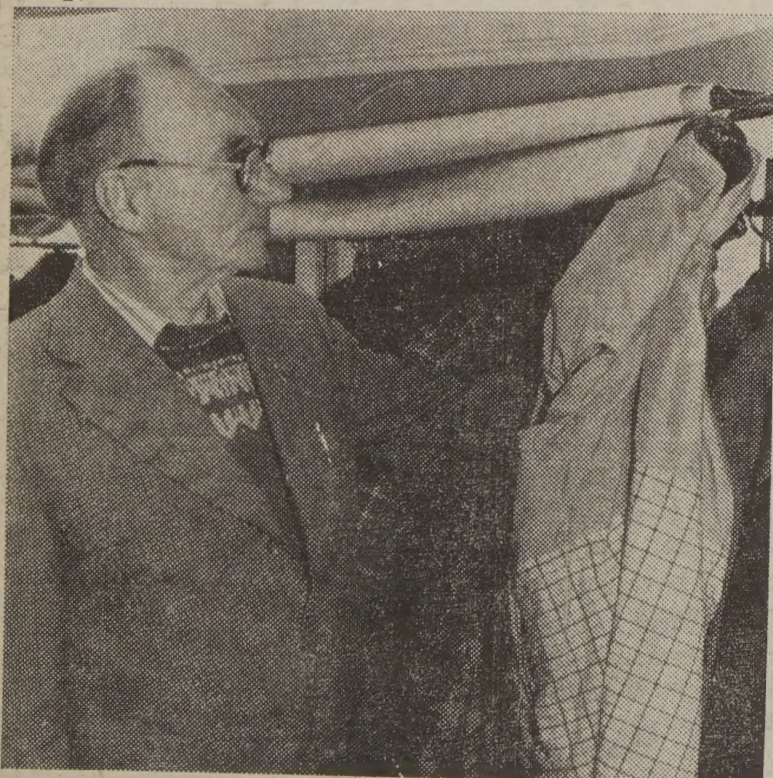
● FRED and Wyn O'Shea: "We've popped in because we used to work here for four years. We like to see how things are getting on now. We gave up because we wanted to see a bit more of our grandchildren and have more free time. Before we helped out in the shop we were 17½ years collecting for spastics, we've always worked for them — never any other charity."



● MRS Ethel Martin of Canterbury with her foster child, Funkie Adenti, aged three, often brings items into the shop and buys things as well. "It's a bit like a swap-shop," she said.



● MRS Joyce Callen, who helps out in the shop three days a week, was recently widowed. She likes getting out of the house and meeting people, so her work at the Spastics Shop fills her need as well as "doing a bit of good."



● HERBERT Watson: "I come in every day — mostly for warmth you could say. No, I just amble in and occasionally buy something—nothing in particular. But it's somewhere to come and look."



● MRS Susan Porter: "I come in every week from my home in Sturry to donate bits and pieces. I chose the Spastics because I think they're a good cause — I've got two healthy children, Caroline, who's eight, and Claire, who is five, and I like to help those who aren't healthy rather than throw stuff out or give it to the jumble. And sometimes I find things too!"

Charity shops enriching the

THERE are few towns in Britain that do not have a market department store, jumbo jumble sale and a needy rather than the pockets of shareholders. Spastics Society is one of the leaders in the field with a year of £1,200,000, which is very big business in their loyal patrons? Spastics News visited a typical find out what they were seeking — and buying.

Every town needs one . . .

THE Spastics Shop at 11 St Peter's Street, Canterbury, commands the prime position of a corner site in the city's main shopping area, and has a turnover of £18,000 a year. A former gift shop, it has been run for the last 4½ years by a retired civil servant, Nick Carter, chairman of the Canterbury and Thanet Spastics Society, and his wife Pauline.

Nick finds the role of shop keeper, a marked contrast with his previous career, a fascinating revelation into people and their behaviour.

"It's therapeutic—sometimes people come in just to talk. We have a number of regulars like that. Others come in to get out of the rain — you can never tell what business will be like — a fine day might take people to the coast instead. And though Canterbury's crowded on



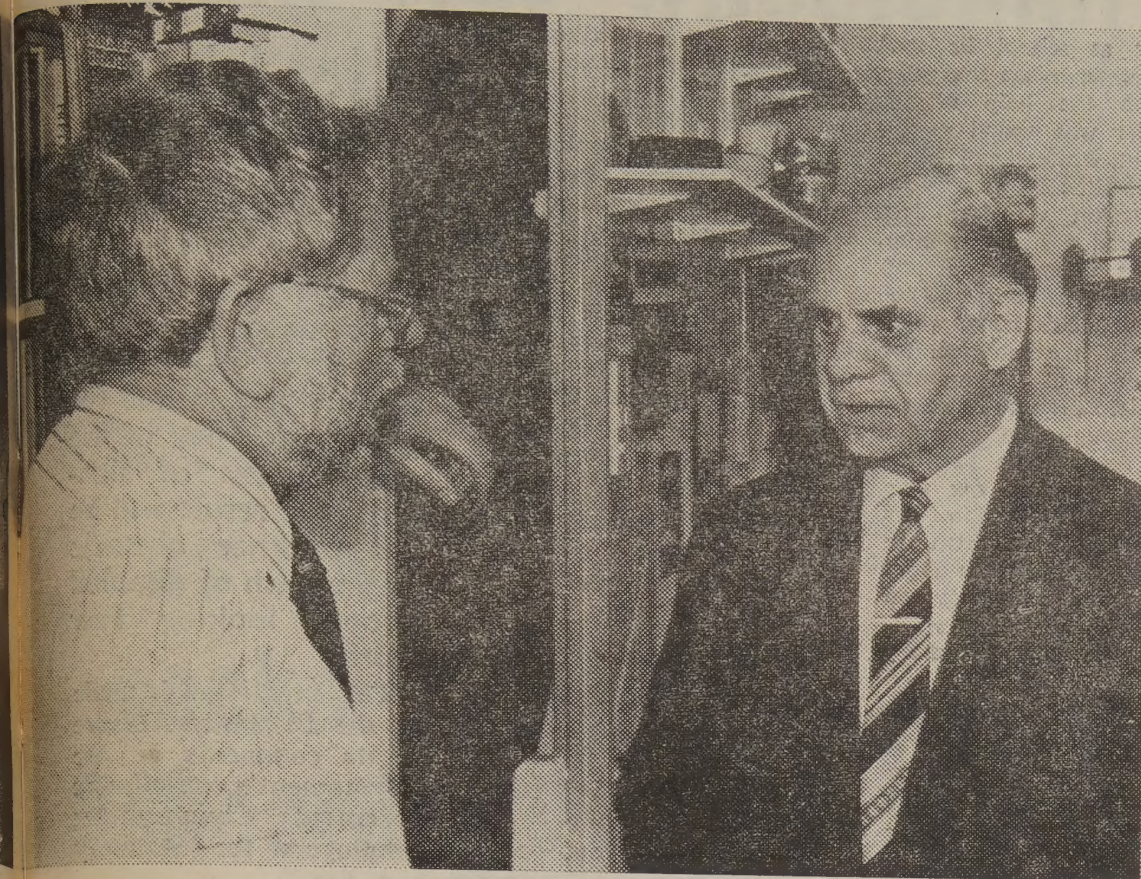
● AN emporium of the unexpected by previous owners find looking for a bargain. The Canterbury attracts everyone from art college and university to

market day it doesn't follow that we'll be busy. One couple's dog, Cindy, always trots in and if we have a squeaky toy, they buy it for her.

"We do very well here. We get some very nice stuff — a descendent of Sir Walter Scott's who lives locally brought in a collector's item. It was a silver mounted pony hoof bearing Sir Walter's family crest, and the name and date of what was obviously a favourite pony's death."

"Occasionally people will come in and ask us for something we haven't got and before they've got to the end of the street, somebody else has brought in exactly what they were after."

Get the helpers — and the bargain hunters



COUNCILLOR Ben Bennett: "I called in because I'm on my way to a meeting of the East Kent Freedom Group for Handicapped People of which I'm the chairman. It's a project to adapt an East Kent coach for the disabled, and I want to let Nick know what things are going, so when I saw him in the shop I popped in."



● **NICHOLAS Lilwall**, a care assistant at a local old people's home walked in the minute the shop door opened and, taking off the coat he was wearing, asked the Carters if they would like it? He said: "I've got two coats and I feel I should only have one. It says in the Bible that he who has two coats should give one away. And I brought it into the Spastics Shop because the Oxfam shop wasn't open!"

big business lives of needy

— a unique blend of Aladdin's cave, down-
profit motive of enriching the lives of the
They are, of course, charity shops and The
Society's 100 shops had a gross turnover last
Why do they have such a fascination for
Spastics Shop to meet the customers and

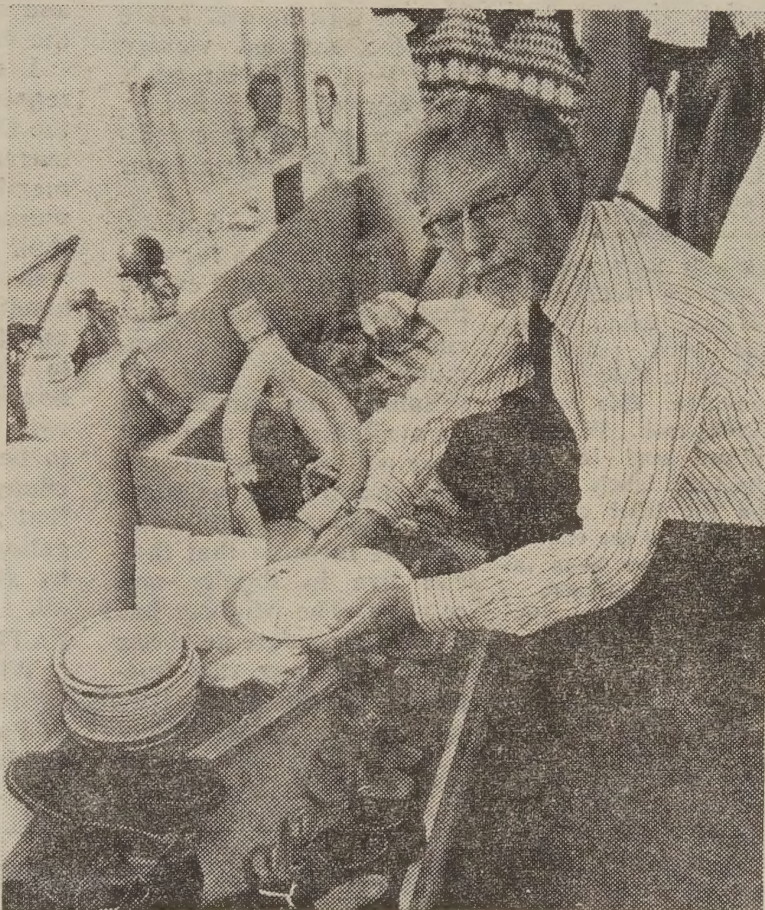
theirs with a dry pair and simply walk out. You never spot it! But balanced against that is the fact that people really are extraordinarily generous to us. There is a constant supply of goods donated and in addition customers very often pay more than the item is priced at, so that it evens out.

"I'm not running a bring and buy sale here — I'm trying to steer a middle way: selling reasonable quality goods and making a profit for the Society."

The Spastics Shop has "competition" from an Oxfam Shop just along the road, and, Nick laughs: "Sometimes people muddle us up completely and come in here and think they're there!"

"Fortunately we've got a very good relationship with them. The Oxfam Shop is not allowed to sell children's shoes for some reason, so any they get they pass on to us, and if someone comes in here looking for something we haven't got we always suggest they try the Oxfam Shop four doors down."

"Equally some people deliberately come in to the Spastics Shop in preference to those run by other charities because they know their money is going to help local people. They know we are involved with schemes round here, because profits from the shop are used in the South East Region."



● **NICK Carter** surrounded by some of the goods that bring customers and cash to the shop. Ninety-five per cent of what is sold has been donated, the rest is jewellery, made by spastic workers, books and some Christmas cards and decorations.



● **MRS Ellen Beattie:** "I'm 81 and every week after I've got my pension I come in here and look for something to wear! I like a little bit of a change and the shoes are useful. I don't buy anything, not every week, just have a look round. After all at my age I'm not looking for style—as long as it's warm in winter and cool in summer. And I've found some real bargains!"



● **FRANK Hammersley:** "I don't come here all that often I suppose. What usually happens is I buy a pile of books, and then once I've read them I bring them back for others — unless they're technical books about railways or traction engines."



● **MRS Irene Smith** of Canterbury was just passing the shop when she saw some recipe books in the window. She bought two, and on leaving said she would bring some books back to the shop as a donation.



● **MARJORIE Roberts:** "I've never worked for my living since I married and I'm 75 now, but I've always done voluntary work. I come in occasionally to deliver stuff and a lot of people say 'I've seen you at the Spastics Shop, would you like some things?'—it all helps. And I come to find bargains for myself and other people."



where goods unwanted at home with customers in the Spastics Society Shop in the local living on a low income.

The bugbear of any shopkeeper is the shop-
and Pauline recalled
incident where a couple
young girls came into
shop. "One asked me
a black skirt and I
we had one and I
ted everywhere for it
her. She stood beside
while I searched — and
as in her bag the whole
e. The police rang us
er, the girls had been
ed up somewhere else
the items stolen from
shop still had our
ers on them to identify
n."

another favourite play
Nick was the swap.
ple will come in out of
rain with wet shoes, go
pairs, slip off their
p footwear, replace

Spastics News told his story, now

A new life for Duncan

DUNCAN Curtis, the 19-year-old multiply handicapped youth whose parents appealed to **Spastics News** for help has been transferred to a new residential centre. John and Jean Curtis of Grasmere Close, Mexborough, wrote to **Spastics News** in desperation at the way their son's behaviour was deteriorating after his placement by Doncaster Social Services against their wishes.

The family had wanted Duncan to attend the Society's Dene College, but he had been sent locally to Ravensfield Lodge, Conisborough, and Mrs Curtis

described the last three years as "torture."

Mrs Curtis begged **Spastics News** for help after Duncan attacked an elderly man with a pen knife and tried to set fire to his training centre. Her previous complaints about Duncan's freedom to roam and his "filthy" condition because he was unable to keep himself clean, she complained, had been ignored.

As a result of her anguish being front-paged on **Spastics News** she says: "There was a very strong reaction from the social services and Area Health Authority — they broadcast that our allegations were unfounded but blatantly disregarded any evidence!"

"But in spite of this they have lost no time in looking into our problems, and Duncan has been offered a place at Millstream View. We've had a look round the place with Duncan and the residential officer, Mrs Chisholm, came and had a long chat with us and was very understanding."

"She is determined that all three of us should have a very different life to the last four years, and that if things aren't going right then we get together and talk things over. If only someone would have listened to us four years ago!"

And Mrs Curtis praised **Spastics News** for its efforts and the way Duncan's story was presented.

In addition she feels that Duncan is much happier and contented since the pheno-barbitone he was being given for his fits has been withdrawn.

But the story very nearly ended in tragedy — for a few days after Duncan's case was publicised, he was given a bus pass despite Mrs Curtis's fears of his lack of road sense. He took a bus to Doncaster and crossing the road was knocked down by a motorbike. "He was very badly shaken up," said Mrs Curtis.

I HAVE a 13-year-old son named Richard, he has been physically handicapped since birth. The handicap is a lack of co-ordination of hands and legs; this I have been told is due to having cerebral palsy at birth. Mentally he has no problems as he is intelligent and bright at school. He does not require a chair to get about and he has a go at most things, including football and cricket. He is a happy lad and enjoys whatever he does although at times he can become very emotional.

LETTERS

He attends a school for the physically handicapped in Solihull, in which he lives all the week and returns home at the weekends. Through this school and the social worker for The Spastics Society, Mr Keith Soutar, he is now able to attend the normal school next door to his own school full time. In fact he has just commenced his third term, and he is doing very well indeed.

Your labels please...

READERS will be interested to learn that by October 1, 600,000 Heinz Baby Food labels had been redeemed under the "Save a Baby" campaign promotion. This represents £15,000 cash. Will all readers please send in any Heinz Baby Food labels to the address on the label as the promotion closes at the end of November, when we hope to reach our target of £25,000.

A further promotion by Heinz started on October 1 and runs until March 1, 1982. Any Heinz label qualified and is worth 1p to The Spastics Society. Would readers bring this to the notice of their friends and encourage them to tick The Spastics Society box on the reverse of the label. As we are only one of 12 charities involved, the more our supporters tick our panel, the more money the society will receive.

A. C. ROBINSON,
Senior Appeals
Development Officer,
The Spastics Society.

My son's integration success story

Whilst at school he took an interest in micro-computers and with the help of Mr Soutar he was tested at the Neath Hill Professional Workshop in Milton Keynes by Mr Peter Deakin who adjudged that he had a flair for computers. As a result I am now in the process of raising £2,000 for the Aidis Trust Ltd, which has supplied the computer for Richard, and at the moment I have raised the sum of nearly £1,500 through the generous help of Aston Villa Football Club and some of my own colleagues. Mr Deakin has been a great help, also, in helping Richard to learn about computers and no words can say thank you.

Richard is one of many

who are being allowed to attend a normal school and be treated no different than others. He has made many friends, and I know that some of the teachers had never before taught a child who was handicapped, so they have also learnt something different. We are pleased at the progress that has been made at both schools and feel sure that if more schools in the country like the two in Solihull worked more closely together then more and more handicapped children would benefit.

C. HITCHCOCK,
Lindsay Walk,
Temple Herdewyke,
Leamington Spa,
Warwickshire CV33 0UH.

The unpaid army

REGARDING the Government Green Paper "Care in the Community."

Of course community care is cheaper than hospital care. This is because, at the present time, there is an army of unpaid workers who care for the disabled in their own homes. These are the married women who look after an adult member of their family, and because they are dedicated are neither paid nor recognised.

The Spastics Society, and everyone else for that matter, must indeed ensure that, when patients are discharged into the community that not only will suitable accommodation be available, but also that there will be sufficient staff who are willing, qualified and adequately paid to support them so that they can live in dignity and comfort. The Minister has a lot to do before he closes down any long stay hospital. Unsuitable as they are for a great many patients they are better than being discharged into

a mainly hostile community.

Before he compares costs he should make sure that the married women—who carry most of the burden—are at least granted the Invalid Care allowance at present afforded to men, single women, friends and common-law wives of the disabled.

I suggest that the first requirement for "Care in the Community" is that the currently fit and fortunate members of that community come to terms with their own fragility and welcome the mentally handicapped into their midst instead of objecting to almost every proposed housing project as at present. They will also have to be more willing to pay enough rates and taxes so that moral and legal obligations can be discharged by stewards on behalf of all.

PATRICIA
WILLIAMSON,
SRN,
St Pauls Wood Hill,
Orpington,
Kent BR5 2SR.

Sick pay plans hit disabled workers

IF the Government goes ahead with its plan to make employers responsible for paying sick pay in the early weeks of sickness, the result will be yet another obstacle in the path of disabled people looking for work.

This prediction is made by the Disability Alliance in its comments on the Government's consultative document "Compensating Employers for Statutory Sick Pay."

The Alliance argues that when employers become liable to pay sick pay, they will be much more cautious about taking on anyone whose health seems suspect. Many disabled people enjoy perfectly good health apart from their disability, but even they may be affected by employers playing safe.

The Alliance quotes the views of four employers' organisations to show that it is not alone in its fears.

In the consultative document the Government outlines two alternative methods of compensating employers for the extra costs they will bear. The Alliance shows that neither method will remove the disincentive to employing disabled people.

The Alliance also restates its more general grounds for opposing the Government's intention to change the system of support during sickness. "It will mean, quite simply, a cut in the income received by most families when a breadwinner falls ill . . . Neither in the Green Paper nor in the more recent consultative document has the Government evinced any concern for the well-being of sick people, though this should be its first consideration. Its proposals will make sickness a time of greater hardship for many people, among those newly disabled."

The Alliance calls on the Government not to proceed with its proposals.

Death of Major Martin

MAJOR Patrick Martin, OBE, who joined the Society in its early days to help out on a temporary basis and stayed 15 years, has died. He had retired from the Army after a distinguished career in both World Wars and then worked in hospital administration.

He joined the Society in 1957 as mail supervisor of the Christmas Seals appeal. The demands of the job grew with the expansion of the appeal but the Major still found time to act as Spastic League Club collector from the Spastics Pool's inception and donated his collector's commission to Society funds. By the time he retired in April 1972 he had donated £1,800 in this way.

For the past nine years he enjoyed his retirement in Surrey where he died after a brief illness.



MAUREEN Feest has an armful of cuddles which proved a worthy fund raiser for the Worthing and District Spastics Society's Caledonian Market. The Society had been despondent before the event which is held annually because there was no storage space available for the furniture stall which in the past has proved one of the biggest money spinners. When it came to counting the cash, chairman Mrs Dorothy Till was thrilled: "We are only £100 down on last year's total — I expected us to be well down without the furniture stall."

The figure made was £1,190 which will go towards the running costs of the Fitzalan Howard Day Centre.

Picture by Worthing Gazette.

Fund raising village

BEAUMONT village held its first ever fete for the Tendring and District Spastics Society and raised £50. Former Society Chairman, Aubrey Constable, said he was delighted with the effort to raise money for a Society outside the village. The Society also raised £153 at a fair,

Tragic death on river expedition

THE 10 members of the Kayak '81 Expedition down the icy floods of the Alsek River through Yukon gold territory always knew that there was danger. The current is fierce and the water bitterly cold, and the trip had never been undertaken before.

However they were determined to go ahead and because it coincided with the International Year of Disabled People, the expedition members decided to do the trip on behalf of The Spastics Society.

Halfway through the perilous voyage the canoeists, all of international repute, waited for the youngest member of the

team, Thierry Giorgetti, of France, aged 19, to appear on the choppy white water.

When he failed to appear they signalled the helicopter circling above and filming the attempt for Canadian TV. The crew flew back along the treacherous rapids and found the empty canoe with Thierry floating in the water. Despite all their efforts Thierry was already dead. It is unlikely that the cause of the accident will ever be known. After five minutes in the sub-zero waters fed by glaciers a man loses consciousness, and soon drowns.

Thierry was an experienced kayaker in the first French national division, who had canoed throughout the world.



MEMBERS of the Citizen's Band Radio Rebels Club of York showed they were on the right wave length when it comes to charity fund-raising. They tuned into the York and District Spastics Society to receive £500 from their sponsored pram push. Harry Bundy, chairman of the York Rebels, said: "We had 10 prams taking part and everybody dressed up as babies — it was a great day." And he got the cheque blown up at a prin-

ter's shop for the presentation to Len Daley, secretary-organiser of the society.

Said Len: "It's an extra big cheque for an extra big effort. In fact I'm sure this is the most we've ever received from a pram push."

Our picture shows Len Daley receiving the cheque from Carol Kay, Rebels Club secretary and chairman Harry Bundy.

Yorkshire Evening Press picture.

Why didn't the train 'take the strain' for wheelchair children?

THIS is the "Age of the Train" so Gill Brearley, deputy head of a London special school, thought she'd let the train take the strain when it came to transporting eight severely handicapped pupils in wheelchairs down to the Society's Churchtown Farm Field

— as BR seeks Railcard custom

A NEW Railcard offering half-rate rail travel for nearly three-quarters of a million disabled people was being introduced by British Rail in September.

The card costs £10 and is available to registered disabled of all ages, and entitles the holder and a travelling companion to half-rate ordinary single and return tickets and half-price Awayday (day return) tickets.

At the new Railcard launching, Sir Peter Parker said he was delighted that it had proved possible to introduce the card during the International Year of Disabled People. And a lot of the credit for achieving this was due to the help and advice British Rail had received from the Department of Health and Social Security, the Royal Society for Disability and Rehabilitation and the Royal National Institute for the Blind.

Breakthrough

Sir Peter said that a special vote of thanks was due to the Post Office for making available their 24,000 offices for the validation of applications. It was, he said, the breakthrough British Rail and the disabled were looking for and which would make applying for a card simple and straightforward.

The principal groups of disabled people who qualify for the Railcard are: Registered blind / partially sighted; recipients of attendance allowance; recipients of mobility allowance; and war disabled (80 per cent or more disability).

Leaflets incorporating application forms and giving full details including categories of eligibility are available from all post offices and railway stations.

Applications must first be certified at a Post Office — on presentation of the appropriate document — and then forwarded to British Rail at an address given on the form.

British Rail stress that the Railcard will run experimentally until the end of 1982 during which time they will review its working and scope. One bonus — early purchase of the Railcard gives the holder 16 months use.

Studies Centre, at Lanlivery in Cornwall.

To be sure the journey went without a hitch she contacted British Rail in March to find out what particular arrangements she should make. She asked for a prompt reply because there were plenty of details to sort out and confirm.

At the end of the month she got an acknowledgment from the supervisor at Paddington Station to

say he was seeking guidance.

On May 13 Mrs Brearley got her "prompt" reply — British Rail would only take TWO wheelchairs on the train. "And we had six who could not come out of their wheelchairs for travelling."

Another letter was sent off and this time the reply reiterated the first in saying only two wheelchairs but suggesting an alternative — the party could be split in half and travel on two

separate trains...

Mrs Brearley enlisted the help of local MP, Peter Bottomley, to write to BR's chief, Sir Peter Parker, but the response: "A very nice letter" merely elaborated on the original reply.

And that was that — as far as BR were concerned. Mrs Brearley was determined that the children should go to Lanlivery and they did — by road. "The coach was superb — but £600 to take eight children — it's crazy!"



● TIM Yeo, the Director, welcomed Molly Wynne when she was brought on her first ever visit to the Society's London headquarters by Barry Peet, Warden of Coombe Farm residential centre, where Molly has worked for the last 25 years.

Molly's 25 caring years at same Society centre

MOLLY Wynne is one of five sisters who have all worked at Coombe Farm, the Society's residential centre in Croydon, but Molly has a special claim to fame. She has worked for the Society almost longer than anyone else — 25 years.

The Coombe Farm Centre had been open just six weeks when Molly answered an advertisement in the local paper for a domestic. She had no idea what kind of place she would be going to. "The door was opened by a man in a white coat and I really thought I'd come to a hospital."

"There were just 16 residents then and everything was run on very strict lines just like a hospital. If you were seen talking to the residents for even five minutes you would be asked if there wasn't a job you could be getting on with? I've worked all over the centre — the girls' floor, the boys' floor and the kitchen but now I work in the laundry."

With 43 residents at the centre now, Molly reckons: "The work is harder but the atmosphere is so different —

the old days we cooked on a solid fuel cooker, had open coal fires and used to make the toast over them. There was a lovely old staircase as well, really beautiful, but that had to be demolished as the centre needed more room, so one way and another there have been a lot of changes."

As a tribute to Molly's quarter of a century in the Society's employ she was invited up to the Society HQ in London by the Director, Tim Yeo. It was the first time she had ever visited Park Crescent and she said: "I was terribly nervous about it all but it is much more friendly than I ever expected."

Now Molly, aged 57, is looking forward to many more years working at Coombe Farm, and could be the first to receive a special certificate to be awarded to those who have given outstanding service to the Society.

Pushover

A BEACON of coins built on the bar of the Turk's Head, Norton, by regulars from sponsored events and a raffle has been given the push — and the cash cascade when counted amounted to £468 for the Cleveland Spastics Society.

CREWE and District Spastics Society made £297.71 on its recent flag day when Crewe Air Cadet Corps where among the volunteer collectors.

Disabled soccer fans pay penalty

THE soccer season is here but Coventry City Football Club have already committed a foul where the disabled are concerned for they must pay a penalty for the Club's plush new stadium.

Whereas other fans only have to pay £2 a ticket for a seat, the disabled must pay that, plus a £10 a year registration fee—and so must the volunteers who push the wheelchairs.

In the old stadium there was space for 110 handicapped fans under cover. Now the space is uncovered and the number is cut to 37—and there are no toilets.

The club's explanation of this kick at the sick is that it must cover lost revenue.

For Clive Heath, confined to a wheelchair by cerebral palsy, aged 35, and receiving just £31.50 a week State benefit it's just not fair play.

He said: "I have been following the team for 21 years, but I'll never go again. There is no way I could afford it."

For that was the cost that BR forced on the expedition. "Westminster Under School raised £250 through a sponsored swim organised by David Smith, there were private donations and the Adamson Trust — may their name be writ in gold — gave us £300 to make up the price.

"But," Mrs Brearley went on, "When I was in the thick of all this a lady wrote to BBC Radio 4's PM programme enthusing about how kind BR had been to her disabled husband, which I'm sure they were, absolutely great."

"My daughters heard this and just brought me a pen and paper, and said: 'Write! I wrote that I was delighted but... The producer of PM checked with BR and got just the same answers as everybody else."

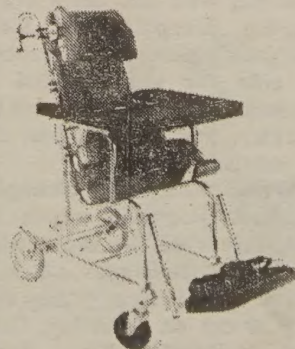
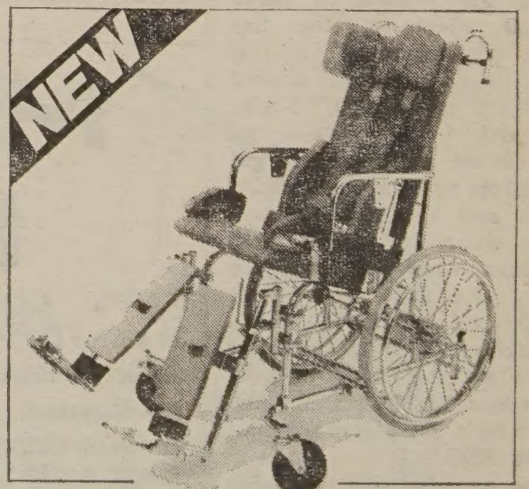
Now the youngsters aged 11-15 from the Charlton Park School have had their golden coach trip and said Mrs Brearley: "The journey was the most comfortable we've ever had. The coach was big enough for us to have wheelchair dancing on board. The children could sit facing each other, talk and there was plenty of room to move."

"I cannot speak too highly of the holiday, the centre, or Dr Mike Cotton and his staff there. The children, who are all multiply handicapped and with additional difficulties, made so much progress and grew in so many different ways as a result of it. And for my staff — I'd arranged for two to be off each day and every day they came as well, so as not to miss out on the activities."

THE SERIES 6600 CARE CHAIR

A NEW ADDITION TO THE ORTHO KINETICS RANGE

- The most advanced adaptive wheelchair on the market for the handicapped teenager or small adult.
- Offers a greater number of important options than any comparable chair.
- Exceptional flexibility allows the therapist to work on a wide variety of positioning and mobility problems.
- Renowned Ortho Kinetics "After Care" service.
- Free demonstration and patient assessment.
- Supplied as a stroller or with self propelling wheels.



ORTHOKINETICS

Care Chair Division

24 South Hampshire Industrial Park, Totton, Southampton. SO4 3ZZ
Tel: Southampton (0703) 863629

ORTHOKINETICS. PEOPLE. FIRST & FOREMOST

Manchester may run into world record books

WITH 25,000 application forms out, Paul Kelly and Jock Eggington, race co-ordinators for the Society in Manchester, could have the world's biggest marathon on their hands.

The run is being held on October 19 starting and finishing in Whitworth Park — which fortunately, is opposite Manchester Royal Infirmary.

"We'll just have to wait and see how it goes," said Jock. "The route is 26 miles 285 yards and we've one chappie who reckons on a time of two hours and 12 minutes.

"The area itself is one complete circle, going through six different districts, and there are only two hills, at 19 miles and 21 miles.

"Everyone has been very helpful, the Police in the six districts, the St John Ambulance Brigade, the Territorial Army; all the hospitals have been informed and the race is being run according to British Athletics Association rules. And Nestles are providing the orange juice refreshments.

"The first man and woman home will be

flown by Aer Lingus to take part in the Boston marathon next spring."

Among those who have committed themselves to the loneliness of the long distance run — if that's at all possible in a crowd of thousands — is the Society's Executive Council member Jan Hildreth who competed earlier this year in the London Marathon. Enthusiasm for the event is running high with forms being picked up at the rate of 1,000 a day, and Paul Kelly has gone on record as saying: "I'm flabber-

gasted. We could never have foreseen this kind of response!"

Paul and Jock have been working on the event for the last six months and originally expected a turnout of 5,000. The New York marathon this time last year attracted 14,400 entrants and if Manchester puts its best foot forward, it could beat that. Said Paul: "It's possible at the rate the entry forms are being collected and the number of people who are confirming they'll run that we'll do it."

Joyce Gardner, snooker star



JOYCE Gardner, who invaded the man's world of snooker and billiards to win the Women's World title seven times and at the same time raise nearly

£100,000 for The Spastics Society, has died, aged 68. She travelled up and down the country for almost 20 years on her fund-raising mission, aided by her husband Bill Williams, playing against the top men's names in the game.

Joyce was a dazzling red-head whose femininity belied her toughness and energy in reaching the top in an almost exclusively male preserve.

Her snooker exhibition matches always drew massive support and she continued to play right up until her husband's death in 1978.

Peter Jordan, the Society's Appeals Planning Officer said: "Joyce was a star in every sense of the word and her boundless enthusiasm for our cause had to be seen to be believed. In all her efforts on our behalf she was aided by her husband Bill, who adored her.

"Joyce will always be remembered with great affection by those who were privileged to know her and not least by those in the Society."

Stars pay tribute to Leslie

LESLIE Grade was the Stars Organisation for Spastics treasurer for many years and on his death the SOS wanted to give him a fitting memorial for his devoted service. Now a national raffle has been organised, promoted by his son, Michael, his last major contribution before he leaves London Weekend Television for American TV.

SOS Director, Sheila Rawstone explained: "The prizes are fantastic and all donated. For 25p people can win the star prize of a Volvo 343, £500 cash, a diamond and sapphire ring, Pye music centre, Philips colour TV, Emmanuel dress, Jean Muir voucher, Commodore home computer, a suite at the Dorchester for a weekend and other prizes."

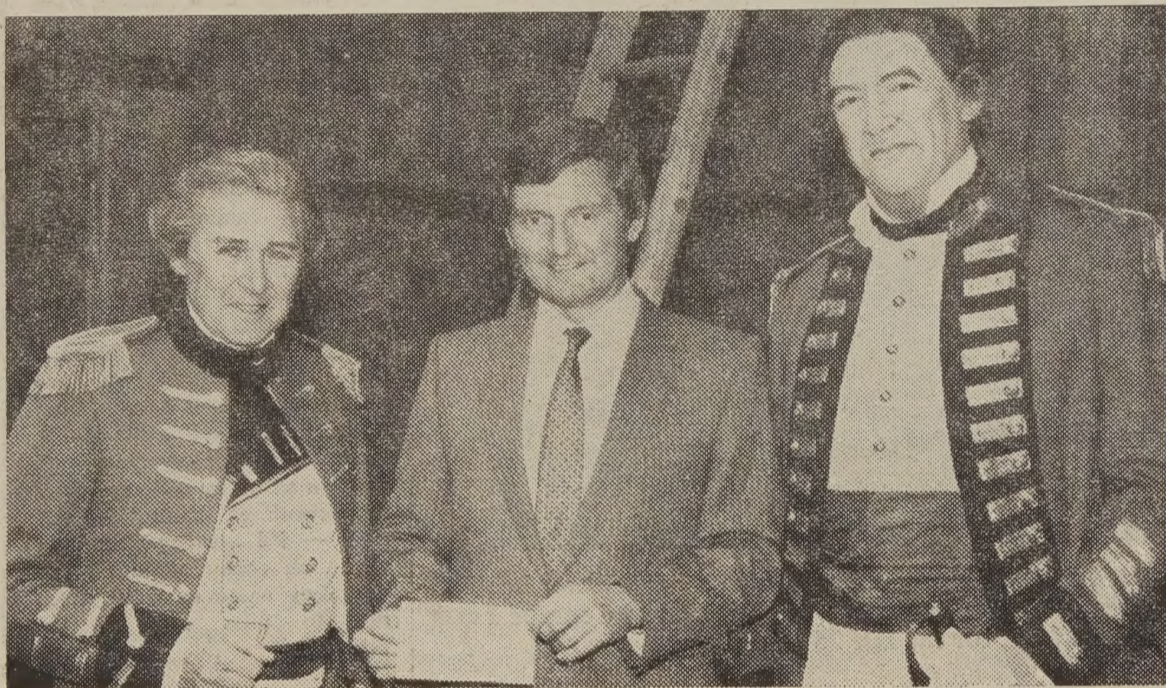
Great names among the donors include Gucci, Hermes, Moet and Chandon, Floris, Asprey and a host of others including British Gas, Great Universal Stores, Trustee Savings Bank, Commercial Union, Daphne's Restaurant, Justin de Blank, The General Trading Stores, Olympia International Show Jumping Championships, Parrots, Quentin Crewe, Jesse Smith of Tetbury, Reckitt and Colman and Vogue.

"We are hoping to make £80,000 which is the top figure allowed since the law was changed in July, to double the figure of £40,000," Sheila explained.

"Now we are hoping to get the tickets sold in pubs, clubs, offices and factories — anywhere there are people. SOS members were out in force during the Bob Hope Golf Classic and sold £2,000 worth of tickets. The prizes will be drawn at the SOS Ball at Grosvenor House on November 15 by a prominent member of the SOS."

Anyone who wants a ticket or would like to sell some should contact the SOS at 12 Park Crescent, London, W1N 4EQ.

Stage presentation



Travelling aids show

THE Visiting Aids Centre, a mobile exhibition trailer organised by The Spastics Society and financed by the DHSS, travels the country — to enable handicapped people who may not be able to venture far from their homes to see what helpful aids are on the market.

Continuing on its travels, the centre will be at Milburngate Open Car Park, Durham, until Friday, October 9.

● ONE of the most telling quotations from George Bernard Shaw's "The Devil's Disciple" is: "The worst sin towards our fellow creatures is not to hate them, but to be indifferent to them—that's the essence of inhumanity."

And nothing could have been a more appropriate backdrop to the presentation of a cheque to Star's Organisation for Spastics chairman, Anthony Quayle. He is directing and starring in the play along with Bernard Bresslaw at the Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham, and Richard Haynes, marketing director of Foster Menswear, found himself on stage to hand over £4,100 for the SOS.

The money had come from the Solihull-based firm's Fun Run which had been held because the firm wanted to make a contribution to the International Year of Disabled People. A caring gesture which tangibly demonstrated its humanity.

Motor bike pair on funds marathon

ANDY Gibson's sister, Rachel, works at the Society's Beech Tree Unit, at Royston, Herts, as a resident therapist and as a result Andy and his friend Bob Flewitt have a motor-bike marathon ahead of them.

For the idea of doing a sponsored ride round their home town in Wigan for Beech Tree has swelled into a round Britain tour, excluding Scotland, taking in 25 centres run by the Society and local groups.

Yamaha is providing the bikes and accessories, and BP the petrol and oil, and people are being asked to guess just how many miles the pair will cover. The one who gets it right will have the choice of a new Yamaha QT50-50 cc motor cycle, or £250 worth

of Yamaha accessories, or a £250 voucher towards a bigger bike.

The motor-bike marathon is being co-ordinated by the Society's appeals officer for the North West region, Bob Christie, who has entry forms bearing Swap Shop's Keith Chegwin's picture and message to ride for the disabled, at Yamaha outlets throughout the country, and it costs just 25p to enter.

World motor-bike champion Michael Lee will check the mileometers of the bikes when Andy and Bob roar off from Beech Tree House — they start at 6.30 am on Saturday, October 10, and fellow champ John Surtees will be on hand to check the readings when, around mid-day the following Friday, they draw up outside Society Headquarters in Park Crescent. He will then seal the readings in an envelope and he and the two motor-

cyclists will be the only people to know just what the clocks show until the last receipted entry has been received.

Andy works for the Post Office, is 27, and has been riding for the last 11 years. He is an RAC and ACU instructor and has passed his Institute of Advanced Motor-Cyclists Test. Bob is 22, employed by Liverpool City Council Highways Department, has been riding for six years and is also an RAC and ACU instructor who will be taking his Institute of Advanced Motor - Cyclist's test soon.

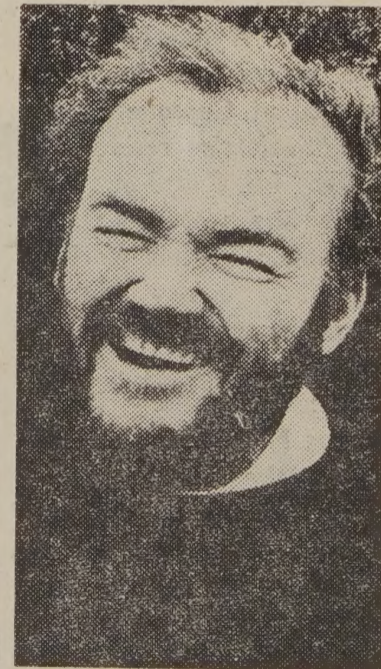
From Meldreth they will head up to East Anglia, going up to Carlisle and Barrow, west to Wales, along the South Coast and then to London, visiting four or five centres each day.

The smell of the grease rag, the roar of the bike should all add to a healthy injection of cash into the Society's coffers.

World acclaimed Christy Brown

CHRISTY Brown, the man who more than any other revealed that inside a totally handicapped body a brilliant literary brain could exist, has died at the age of 49.

Born in Dublin, the 10th



child of 23, he was at first regarded as no more than a vegetable, lying in a box in the corner of the kitchen. Then at the age of five he grabbed a piece of chalk with his left foot and began to draw.

His mother, who had always had faith in him, taught him to read and at the age of 21, he produced an autobiography "My Left Foot". It sold 14,000 copies, and is to be re-issued as part of the International Year of Disabled People campaign.

However, it was to be 16 years before he wrote again, but Secker and Warburg editor David Farrer kept in constant

touch and eventually Christy delivered a novel "Down All the Days". A mammoth semi-autobiographical work, it was a huge success, earning him £100,000. It was published in 15 countries.

The enormous acclaim earned by this work gave him an established standing in the world of serious literature, and also led to an invitation to appear on the David Frost show. Christy accepted — an act of enormous courage for a man whose speech was virtually incomprehensible — but through the appearance he met Mary Carr, a dental assistant from Killarney. Said David Farrer: "They fell in love — she with him as much as he with her." They married in 1972.

His financial independence resulting from his work enabled the couple to eventually settle in the Somerset village of Parbrook, in a home with many mechanical gadgets to increase Christy's independence and mobility. He continued to type with his left foot and wrote two further novels, "A Shadow of Summer" and "Wild Grow the Lilies," and several volumes of verse including "Of Snails and Skylarks". He had recently completed a new novel titled "A promising Career" which will be published next year.

Said David Farrer: "I found him a quite astonishing person — he was a man of enormous courage who absolutely ignored his disability."

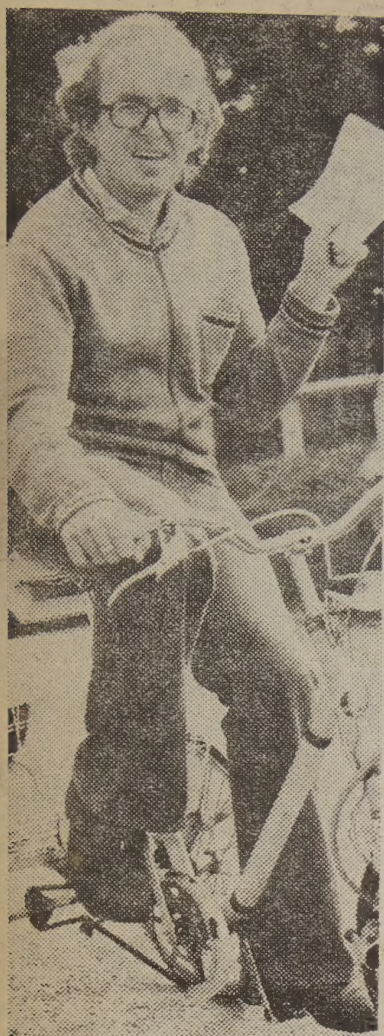
Christy died through choking on September 7.

WHEELCHAIRS Ashley Mobility

Sole distributors of Vessa Ltd's 'Vitesse' Power-Chair with Kerb Climbers and Hand-Propelled Chairs in the Midlands and Powys.

'Vitesse' and 'Standard' available on Motability HP.

Hay Road, Hay Mills, Birmingham B25 8HY. Telephone 021-772 5364. Also at Warndon, Worcester (Telephone 28575)



'Magnificent' effort by Leslie

LESLIE Caley is a 20-year-old kitchen porter at the local Royal Station Hotel—he is also cerebral palsied and has had a number of operations on his feet. So when he set out on a sponsored walk for the York and District Spastics Society, he was really putting his best foot forward.

In fact Leslie covered the 24 miles between York and Leeds with something like 42,000 paces and it took him 7 hours 50 minutes — 10 minutes less than the eight hours he had set himself.

He started at 6 am to avoid the heavy traffic on the main road and Len Daley, the Society's organiser said: "Leslie's magnificent effort is worthy of the highest commendation." Leslie said: "I'm delighted with the amount of money I raised — I did it for our local society which has been so kind to me for many years — it's twice as much as I had hoped for."

For Leslie's personal marathon brought in a staggering £451.19! He is pictured taking the weight off his feet — and holding aloft the cheque from his sponsored walk.

£2,000 fete

DESPITE being smaller both in number of residents and staff, the Society's Jacques Hall Centre at Manningtree, Essex, made at £2,000 profit at its recent fete.

Said Michael Stopford the Society's Head of Centres: "For any residential centre, but particularly one of the smaller ones, this is a magnificent effort."

FUND RAISING CASH AND CARRY WHOLESALERS

Thousands of lines to choose from in HARDWARE, HOUSEHOLD LINENS, TOYS, FANCY GOODS, etc, for your Fete or Bazaar.

Fanfare Productions
2 Wrentham Avenue, Kensal Rise,
London NW10.

Telephone: 01-969 6994 —
We will tell you more.

Young and disabled — so £600 premium 'Staggering' insurance halts her driving ambition

TINA Everitt was on the road to nowhere with her specially adapted car presented to her by Warwickshire Social Services Department. For the insurance premium she was quoted was £602 — way beyond her means. The reason it was so high is because, where insurance companies are concerned, Tina comes in three high risk categories. She is under 21, a student — and disabled.

Now Tina, 19, of Wentworth Road, Rugby, has her hopes of driving back in top gear, for a specialist driving instruction centre declares her potentially able to drive, and the Rugby and District Spastics Society and the Rugby Charities Shop have presented her with the money for the premium.

Now Tina plans to start learning to drive as soon

as she takes delivery of the car — "When I get the keys I shall be off and away. I was determined to drive so I contacted the charities and asked for their help."

In the spring that Tina was one of two young people chosen for the County Council scheme by which cars are bought for individual disabled drivers, the first time grants of this kind had been made by Warwickshire County Council.

Philip Blundell who first put Tina's case for a car



● **HAVE car — have cash — will travel! Tina Everitt whose hopes of becoming mobile were threatened by the high cost of insurance.**

Picture by Coventry Evening Telegraph.

before the Social Services Committee said he would look into the issue of the insurance premium. "It's quite staggering — I'm sure something can be done about the problems."

Mairwen Meyrick, a former chairman of the Dis-

abled Drivers' Association agreed quotes of £500-£600 were extraordinarily high — Tina's lowest quote from a company was £515. "You have to push very hard and shop around to get reasonable terms," said Mairwen.

And this was borne out by a firm of insurance brokers operating for the Department of Health and Social Security, which offers a discount scheme for disabled drivers, the firm said Tina's premium would still be over £600.

Academic 'write-off' — now exam success

THE spastic student who had been written off by educational establishments as being "unacademic" and the local authority as a "status seeker," sat down to take an A Level in Religious Studies at Wellington College. Now Gerald Hildreth has confounded all those, except his parents and tutors, by not just passing the A level but getting it at Grade A.

His father, Jan, a member of the Society's Executive Council, said: "Now instead of the rubbish dump all sorts of things are in prospect — including university."

Gerald, 21, had persevered with his studies in the subject aided by Paul Spillane, a house master at Wellington, Robin Stevens, Chaplain of King's College School, Wimbledon, and Eric Pike, curate of Emmanuel Church, Wimbledon.

Said his father: "The State wrote him off but this just proves what the child that is physically slow-learning can achieve if given time and aid. Now Gerald is planning to go for History and Politics at A level and English literature at O level — and then he'll be eligible for university — and state aid for his studies!"



● **MICK McQuade hands two video tapes of the Country and Western Festival held at the Society's Kyre Park to the centre's warden, Colin Hedley.**

Country music show hits high note of profit

MIKE McQuade was speechless after the Country and Western Show at the Society's Kyre Park Centre, Tenbury Wells, Worcestershire. He had sung himself to a stop — but he found his voice later to say it had been an outstanding and memorable success.

For Mike had organised an event which has become renowned as the biggest and best Country and Western festival outside Wembley, and this year's was no exception with 10 top bands playing live, two complete Western towns with staged bullion rob-

beries and gun fights, displays of vintage and modern Rolls-Royces, steam engines, American and British Custom cars, motorcycles — and a performance by the Plantagenet's Medieval Combat Society.

The show attracted nearly 7,000 people whose cars were parked over 40 acres of neighbouring fields, and at the end of the day there was a profit of £4,300 for the centre. And the memory will linger on — for there are 2½ hours of film of the Festival recorded on video so that fans can relive the magic.

THE Newton Elan

the only truly portable powered wheelchair

The Newton Elan is the only electric wheelchair to fold upright with batteries in position. And, of course, when you do want to remove them, the side-slung batteries are much easier to lift off. Independent suspension and two-speed gearbox give a smooth, comfortable ride, indoors or outdoors. And with fully proportional control the Elan is simple to operate and turns in tight corners. Added to that, the Newton Elan is the nicest-looking wheelchair to be seen around in!

from

meadway works

Find out more. Write for our free leaflet or ask for a home demonstration without obligation.

meadway works
Garretts Green Lane, Birmingham B33 0SQ
Telephone: 021-783 6081



'My word' — here's a funds idea to make you think...

A SUPER new fund raising idea which will intrigue children, please their parents and teachers, and go a long way to dispelling criticism of "useless" sponsorship ideas, has been launched in aid of The Spastics Society.

The "My Word Marathon" represents an interesting charitable co-operation between Waddingtons, the games firm, Martins, a national chain of over 1,000 newsagents shops, and the Society. The basic idea is for children to persuade sponsors to back them in a specially devised variation of Waddingtons' card game "My Word."

Half a million Marathon sponsor forms incorporating the special game have been printed and by cutting out the word "cards" incorporated, children make up four-letter words which are then stuck on the form. It is more difficult than it sounds, and because the task stimulates both literacy and numeracy it is hoped that teachers and parents will encourage the sponsorship idea. The forms are being distributed via the Society through schools across the country and through the branches of Martins.

The money raised by children who persuade parents

and friends to sponsor them at word-making will go to the Society's appeal in aid of its unique Beech Tree House project for children with severe behavioural problems. The fund raising potential of the Marathon is enormous, but no target has been set for how much it could raise. As an indication, however, Mr Andrew Lauder, managing director of Waddingtons, said that if only 100,000 of the forms were used, and if children only got the minimum sponsorship of 2p a word, and if they made 10 words, then what a fantastic result!

The firm is offering £300-worth of games as prizes to the three highest scoring entrants, and 200 runners-up, but it is not the prizes which will attract the children to take part. As Tim Yeo, the Society's Director explained at the launching: "We think that an appeal to help multiply handicapped children will find considerable sympathy with healthy, fit youngsters who realise how lucky they are."

The competition will run until March next year. Readers will find a sponsorship form in this issue of Spastics News, and forms are also available from the Society's Regional Offices.

Stars golfers play the charity game



JERRY Steven, Lord Matthews of the Daily Express empire, and Dickie Henderson, a vice-chairman of the Stars Organisation for Spastics who did so much to bring about the Bob Hope Golf Classic in the first place, take a break in the day's play with some of the young handicapped enthusiasts.

Behind the Classic is the big business approach to fund raising, with £600,000 being laid out to launch the four-day event. Despite appalling weather, attendance was thought to be up on last year, and an innovation was

the Classic Celebrity Cabaret screened by ITV. The Gala night was attended by Princess Margaret, who was presented with a bouquet by Angela Taylor, aged 11, who attends the Society's Thomas Delarue School, Tonbridge.

John Spurling, the Kenyan businessman and golfer behind the Classic, hopes to announce that more than the £60,000 handed over to the SOS and the Bob Hope Theatre of the Arts, Eltham, last year, will be presented this time. He is already working on next year's event.

Picture above and of the Classic on the front page by the Daily Express.

COVER BOY

Continued from Page 1

Society's income rose by £1,286,000.

The Report will be presented at the Society's Annual General Meeting in London on October 17.

Delegates will have a full and varied day at the AGM. The programme includes an address by Mr Geoffrey Finsberg, MP, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department of Health and Social Services, and speeches by the Chairman, Mrs Joyce Smith, and Director, Mr Tim Yeo. Delegates will also be voting for candidates nominated for seats on the Executive Council, the governing body of the Society, and this year there are eight candidates for six vacancies.

The meeting promises to be both interesting and stimulating, and particularly important this year in view of the prospect that a turn of the gloomy financial corner may mean expansion in the future, thus making the views of delegates vital.

BRADFORD citizens contributed £521 to the Bradford and District Spastics Society during the annual flag day in the city centre.



"ARE you sitting comfortably? Then I'll begin. . . ." Ingrid Pitt reads from her tale of Bertie the Bus, launched to raise funds for the Society.

Bertie the Bus is on the road to success

ONCE upon a time there was a Continental actress who trained as a doctor and ended up in Hammer horror films as a blood-sucking vampire. Then one day she met a shipping magnate with a passion for buses, and a Swedish physiotherapist who was turning her hand to illustrating. The rich man, the artist, and the actress, got on famously and decided to pool their talents—as a result an original story book for children: "Bertie the Bus," has been launched in aid of The Spastics Society.

Actress Ingrid Pitt took on the role of author, despite her screen experience suggesting that she was more at home eating little boys and girls rather than telling them stories.

"Listen, I really do like telling children stories," she laughed. "I used to do it a lot when my daughter Steffanie was younger, and you soon find out if you are holding their interest. As long as they were quiet, not fidgeting or fighting, you were doing fine. I tried to remember what I learned then when it came to Bertie."

"What really makes him different to all those other story book characters, you see, is that he really does exist. He's a retired London Transport bus and Tony Vlassopulo drives handicapped children about in him."

"Tony is a marvellous man, one of the few rich men I know who'd rather use his money to help people than laze around in Monte Carlo or wherever. He thought it would be a wonderful idea to weave a little fantasy around Bertie, so he financed the publishing. Ulla Reque took care of the illustrations and I did the writing."

Bertie is a magical, talking single-decker who flies his way through time and

space, and already a sequel—Bertie to the Rescue—is well advanced, as are hopes of marketing Bertie promotions, ranging from teacups to tee shirts. There are even plans for a record with words and music from the man responsible for the Tom Jones hit "Delilah," Barry Mason.

If Bertie's magic is potent enough to enthrall the nation's children he could become a sort of "Womble on wheels." In the meantime Ingrid is waiting for the wheels of fortune to turn in the right direction and bring much needed funds to help handicapped children live happily ever after!

FIGHT FOR VAT RELIEF

Continued from Page 1
campaign will come at the Conservative Party Conference at Blackpool on October 14 when at a fringe meeting chaired by Dr Gerard Vaughan, MP, the Society's Director, Mr Tim Yeo, will put the case for reforms to "stop VAT from crushing charities."

He will be speaking on behalf of the Society and 10 other charities which are jointly sponsoring the important meeting.

Tim Yeo told Spastics News: "We think that it is totally unfair for us to be penalised by VAT when local authorities and commercial firms are not. The Government has frequently said that it wants a partnership with the voluntary sector in the provision of care. Well, we are willing to play our part — if we have equal treatment. The present situation is ridiculous and must change

because VAT is an intolerable burden."

"People do not donate money to a charity to see it paid to the taxman, and we estimate that the the Society has been milked of no less than £1 million in VAT since 1973, and the increase in the rate from eight per cent to 15 per cent in 1979 has made matters even worse."

"Just think what the Society could do with that money!"

The fringe meeting, it is hoped, will result in support for the campaign from Tory MPs in Blackpool for the Party Conference, but out in the regions, the Society's local groups and will soon be asked to contact their MPs need for changes in the to convince them of the VAT system which is having such a disastrous effect on their own finances as well as the Society's national budget.

Groups are also being

asked to support a petition which urges the Government to grant VAT relief to charities, and which will be presented to 10 Downing Street. The petition originated with the go-ahead St Austell and District Committee of the Cornish Spastics Society, but with the Society's support it has now become a national affair with a target of 100,000 signatures.

The Society is also seeking an early meeting with Mr Jock Bruce Gardyne, the new Minister of State at the Treasury, essentially to press for relief, but also because the VAT-paying charities are aggrieved at the way the Government, when turning down pleas for exemption, counters with the claim that recent tax concessions to voluntary organisations have benefited them to the tune of £30 million a year.

Now the Society and the other charities are examining their books to see if

these "concessions," which mainly concern deeds of covenant and estate duty, add up to anything like the enormous sums going to the Treasury in VAT. Tim Yeo is convinced that the results will show that what the charities gained on the swings of small concessions was more than lost on the roundabouts of VAT payments.

The Society's facts and figures on concessions-versus-VAT will be revealed at the Annual General Meeting in London on October 17, when Spastics News understands, the setting up of a joint VAT Reform Group embracing eight charities will be announced.

"We have waged the VAT battle for over a year now," said Tim Yeo. "We knew it would be a long fight, and we are not disheartened by the lack of success so far. Make no mistake — this is a battle we are determined to win."

SPASTICS NEWS

Published by The Spastics Society.

Editor: Sheila Jenner.

Editorial office: The Spastics Society, 12 Park Crescent, London W1N 4EQ. Tel: 01-636 5020.

Advertising representative: H. A. Collins Ltd, 37 Ruskin Road, Carshalton, Surrey SM5 3BQ. Tel 01-647 1393.

The views expressed in Spastics News are not necessarily those of The Spastics Society.

Printed by F. J. Parsons, Observer Buildings, Cambridge Road, Hastings, Sussex.